

Linda Clair
Seven-day Meditation Retreat
Kallara Conference Centre, Australia – March 2019
Transcription from Audio Recordings

File 7c – Friday afternoon discussion

Linda: How's it going D.?

Question: I took a break, the one (sit) before last, because I hardly slept at all last night, which is probably compounding it. I lay down on the bed and I was feeling really miserable and a bit wallowy in it. And I got up and I noticed that one of my pant legs was much shorter than the other. (Laughter) I just cracked up – I went, "That'd be right." So that kind of lifted me out of my dark place.

Linda: I put my jacket on the other night and I got into my room and I noticed it was inside out. (Laughing.)

Question: But one thing I did want to share was, I was outside the yoga room on Wednesday having a cup of tea on that green bench, and suddenly the koala ran up the tree branch – and it got finer and finer until the whole branch was so fine – and when I thought, "Oh, this is a disaster," it leapt off with such power straight towards me and landed on the bottom on another branch, all its limbs akimbo. But the interesting thing was it was such an ungainly leap, powerful. When it hit the bottom, the next branch down, it just gathered itself and went rushing up; it was just going for one particular clump of leaves at the very top, with such passion. But that leap it did into complete space was very helpful. (Laughter.) Specially the way all its arms and legs were spread – it was very ungainly. So I'll keep that story from this retreat.

I just wanted to say thankyou again. It's wonderful to have been here.

Linda: One tip for when you are feeling that "blah" stuff is: really get into your posture as well, because I noticed it was really bringing you down and you were slumping a bit. So even though you really don't feel like it, make that effort to sit a bit straighter. It is a big thing, the posture thing. I didn't realise until I started Zen practice how important it was, and it is important. It can affect everything. Just gently straightening up – so try and do that. But if you're tired do what you did – go and have a sleep, particularly if you haven't slept much during the night.

How have you been A.?

Question: Just quietly enduring. But I feel stronger, and my body is not exhausted as it normally is. Although I do look forward to a nice deep massage when I'm back in Sydney. It's been great, thankyou.

Question: I'm just following on about touching people. I wondered how it goes with you since your enlightenment, and you often talk about containing more and more energy and things – how is that when you touch people they don't get an electric shock almost? Because when you touched me it

just felt cool and grounded. Is it because you're so grounded? There is us, but also just in day-to-day life if you have contact with people?

Linda: Can you say the question again?

Question: Well, because of your enlightened state and the amount of energy that you contain and the fast vibration, or whatever it is, in you, do other people – I know we all do on a certain level – but physically do people kind of sense that buzz when you touch them?

Linda: Ah, I don't know. Well, you said you didn't. When I was doing it I just felt energy and it's a bit different in everyone. And all I want to do really is just make contact – it's no big deal. But I think it's more the grounding thing. Yes, the energy thing is interesting. Because some people have said to me, people who have been very involved with Indian gurus, say they go into the room and just feel this "boom." They say, "Oh, I don't feel that around you." And often they say that when they first meet me and then after a while they are affected, but it's a different thing, it's not this "boom." I don't know why. I know in Zen and with the master in Japan, who is the most enlightened – or was, he's dead now – being that I've ever met, he was just so grounded. There wasn't this shot of lightening that people do say – I haven't experienced that with people – but they felt around certain Indian gurus. But there was this incredible – it's hard to explain – this groundedness around him or in him. So maybe it's just different in Japan or in Zen or in different people, I don't know. The energy is really intense but it's very grounded. At first it did feel more electrical and much more, well I'd say now, gross than it feels now. Now I'm aware of it at times but most of the time it's just flowing so smoothly and deeply that I'm not so aware of it.

Question: Thank you .

Question: Just kind of – well mostly I'm wanting to connect with you – but following on grounded and energy. This retreat has been so unusual for me in that I feel incredibly grounded and stable, which I think I came into the retreat with as well. And just really the whole week has just been so steady and so stable, so I'm really not feeling much at all, but including energy. Like I'm sleeping really well at night and I'm not feeling – like I feel really, really well, I feel good, but I'm not feeling...

Linda: High?

Question: High! Yes, exactly.

Linda: High with Shakti. 😊

Question: So I'm just curious about that. I almost feel like I've been sitting really strongly, I've been working really hard, but I think I'm just wondering why I'm not physically feeling more energy than I am.

Linda: Because you're probably at a point where that contrast is not so great. So when you're not so stable you do feel the energy more acutely because there is more of a contrast to your normal state and what you start to feel here. And when you're more stable the energy is flowing more smoothly. It's still going and you're containing it, but you're not getting those extreme highs and lows that you usually get. Because that's what you used to get: you get really high and then really low. So it starts to even out, and some people are a bit put off by that because they're a bit addicted

to the highs and the lows. And that's sort of been your lifestyle with your work and everything for years and years. So this is the time to really stabilise. And you'll feel the effects of this more after the retreat, particularly because you feel so stable now. And there *is* a lot of energy going through your body, but you're just not aware of it because you're in this energy field all the time. Once you go out into the world it will be different. You'll notice it more, you'll feel more, you'll notice things in yourself. But I think it's because you're more stable generally and you're not having those extreme highs and lows. That can be attractive, and really quite addictive.

Question: Yes, I think I was quite addicted to that but it feels so much better to be stable.

Linda: Yes, it's like coming off a drug. And you're much more even but part of you does miss that high. And I know for me for a while I did miss the excitement at times. I'd be going away somewhere and I'd remember the times where I used to feel excited about going away – it was almost better than the trip – and nothing! It's just like this smooth line through everything. But after a while you do get used to it and you do also notice times when you used to get nervous about something and – nothing, you just go in. Like going to the dentist or having an operation or something like that – you're just there doing it one step at a time. There's not this great anticipation about anything, because you're here, you're already here. It's now, it's no big deal.

So you can tend to feel that the result of this is going to be this high forever. I can say for me, relative to how I used to feel, it *is* a high, but when that high becomes just natural and normal – there's nothing to compare it with, there are no lows anymore – so you don't even recognise it as this high state, this ecstatic state. Because there's no opposite to it, it's just this. So in the end you don't miss anything because the memory, the body memory, of all that stuff fades more and more and more until you just can't remember. There's no memory left in the body at all about how it used to feel. So you don't miss what you don't know. And when you don't know anything, you don't miss anything.

So you need to be in that stable state for quite a while to be able to eventually come in to that timeless state that is free from opposites and free from time. But preparing for that is what this stability is all about, so that when you go in it you don't suddenly go, "Oh, this is too much!" and get out. It's like you're preparing yourself, and you're in it more but you don't realise. So the contrasts are less. When things are very relative you can compare them to things, but when they're less relative there's less contrast, there's less of everything. So now being in this state is – there is no comparison to how it used to be, all those trivial highs and lows and the dramas and the emotions and everything – it's nothing. But it all takes time.

Question: About two years ago one time I gave you a hug when I was leaving the retreat, and you felt like one of those electric lamps that you touch, you know, that goes "zzzt", you can feel it in your fingers. And it absolutely spun me away because, for one, I don't have a strong sense of energy in myself or change in my own energy – I don't know whether it's happening or not, I have to take that on trust. And two, I've always doubted a lot of other peoples' comments about surging energy flow. So I didn't expect it. It was totally out of context from anything else and it was definitely you.

So yes, sometimes she does buzz off actual physical energy. It was distinctive; you couldn't miss it, it was the oddest thing. And it's only ever once. So when you asked that question – yes, she does sometimes buzz.

Linda: Only when I'm in the mood. (Laughter.)

Question: It's sort of swirling around a bit, to do with not having so much panic as I've had in the previous years really. And I can see now that the panic is gone, especially this retreat, that I never really understood what you meant – I trusted what you said but I never really got it – when you said, "That movement away from now," that movement towards thought. I just felt my things would just land and they'd be like a package and I'd be in it, sort of before I knew it, and then the heat and sweat and panic and all of that seemed to be wrapped around, "Oh, come back to the belly, start counting." And everything was tight, and so on and so forth. The level of intensity of that seemed to be if the package was emotional, or I had to finish my say(?), all that sort of stuff. It's been happening a bit at home too. There's less interest, like I notice the heat coming and then I know somewhere it's thought coming – well I don't know if it's thought but it's something coming – and I can seem to get to the belly a bit softer. Sometimes just the belly, sometimes, with a lot of effort, to start the counting. Is it just to keep with recognising that heat? Because now I feel as though in the sits I'm sort of watching out for it a bit. Especially if my shins are burning – "Oh, is that heat?" I'm not very clear because it's sort of newish.

Linda: So you get heat associated with thinking? (Yes.) Well, if you can use the sensation as a warning signal use it. So feel it, come back to your belly. Don't wonder about it, because then you'll start analysing the whole thing. Just feel it, come back to your belly. That's what sensations are really for – they're warning signals.

Question: Might have just been getting it a bit complicated.

Linda: Whenever something starts to get complicated, simplify it. Just come back to your breath. *Feel* the sensation. You don't need to analyse it. Doesn't mean you won't at times of course. You know I say all this but of course I did the same thing. Something would happen and I'd go over it, or I'd have a realisation and just go over and over it. But do your best not to.

Question: I've been reluctant to speak up this retreat. I've been reluctant to speak up for a while now in retreats, which is kind of ironic given that for me the theme of this retreat seems to be about recovering my voice in some way. Seeing all the ways in which I've taught myself to not speak up and not say what I need to say. And it's been pretty full-on this retreat, accepting that, and also trying to dig down and trying to work out what my voice might be in certain situations and in my relationships with other people. I don't really know what to say. In the absence of a private interview I wanted to say something about that. I've been hearing other people talk about the emotions that they've been going through and I've had some really emotional days Wednesday, Thursday. And people were sharing all those things and it was really helpful.

Linda: I feel it's more helpful to do it like this than to have private interviews where you think, "Oh, this is private, I can't tell anyone." There are probably certain things it's probably better not to say publicly, but very, very few. So this is the best thing to say – especially this – to say publicly. And it is something you need to really take action on and say what you feel. Don't be scared to say what you feel to people, and in relationships. Don't just ignore it and hope it will go away, because it will still be in you, whatever it is it will still be in you.

Question: Yes, I can see the havoc that I can create for myself and people who care about me.

Linda: And you can hurt people – I'm not talking about anyone specifically – you can hurt people by ignoring them, because they might think that you hate them, you don't like them, but you just don't know how to express yourself. Just say it; just say what you feel in your heart to people, people close to you. Don't be scared to do that.

Question: There's just been a lot of that and a lot of, I guess, processing. Like a fear of hurting people, and going off into hypothetical situations and the potential impact, and going off into all these things and getting a bit caught up in it, and bringing myself back again and again and again.

Linda: Saying that there are times when it's probably better not to say anything. But most of the time it's better just to be as honest as you can, without being brutal about something, you can work out ways to be honest. And you've changed so much in the last few years it's just amazing. So this is a big thing.

Question: Well the last few years I guess I felt pretty discouraged. Because of all the stuff, quite estranged from myself in some way. It's been a big blow to my confidence. And I feel that this retreat I'm sort of recovering that, and that's what this has been about I suppose.

Linda: Well it was really worth coming. And it was probably better that you came independently too this time.

Question: Well that's been a factor. That's been on my mind as well – the ways in which I try and be to other people who I think they want me to be, at the expense of being authentic or being myself.

Linda: Most people do that though, that's how the world works; it's frightening really – everyone trying to be what they think someone else wants them to be. But, at the same time, don't beat yourself up about it. It's not worth doing that either.

Question: Yes, that's the other side of it as well. There's been a bit of that, and just trying to cut it. There's been lots of pain and lots of sensation to come back to which has been fortunate. I guess it's the whole reason I can look at all this stuff.

Question: I've got a question about posture. I've spent a lot of time trying to sit up really straight and every time, around where I've got a curvature, it keeps collapsing. So I've started the sits with doing my own kind of spine scan. I tried to catch it, to be really present to that moment of the collapse, and to try and go in there. And that sort of worked to a point but I could see it was putting me in my head, so I let that go. But this morning I had this situation where I found a place in my back that was solid, like totally stable and still. This retreat has been really hard work, but apart from all that coming back, coming back – I felt like I spent most of the retreat coming back – but with a few moments of actually being in the body, then it's all worth it. This afternoon I could see my mind came back with a vengeance even though the sits were passing in a second, so everything went very fast. So I don't know what to do with this posture thing. I feel like I get stuck in it. And I know you keep saying how important it is and I feel like I'm stuck; I really don't know what to do with it in a way.

Linda: I think you can only do the best you can. Go through it. Do you go and see someone about your back and your posture?

Question: Yes, I do Pilates and I walk and I swim – I do a lot for my body and my back. But I've had to accept that a part of it is just the structure itself and I'm kind of – don't like to use the word – stuck with it, because it got wrecked in a car accident, and also because of the big curvature. And energetically I try to get a sense of what straight is and that in itself is difficult.

Linda: Well, you're sitting fairly straight when I've looked at you. I would not get too obsessed by it. You're probably getting a bit obsessed by the whole thing. So just do your best. Sit as straight as you can but don't get obsessed by it.

Question: Because I've been working so hard.

Linda: I know you have. You've been really good.

Linda: M. I was on the verge of asking you something a few times and then I decided to wait, so I'm glad you spoke up.

Question: I think I was secretly waiting for you to ask. (Much laughter.)

I knew I needed to say something, as poorly formed or whatever, just saying it.